National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement
Checklist for CFSR Style Reviews
Handout #2-A

The checklist below is intended to capture many of the key elements that must be considered and planned for prior to beginning a Child and Family Services style review process. It can serve as a guide for planners and decision-makers to ensure that all the necessary pieces are in place before the reviews start.

I. Input of County/District Being Reviewed

- ❒ Will counties/districts be asked or allowed to complete a self-assessment prior to the review?
- ❒ How will counties/districts have input into the review process up front?
- ❒ Can this input be incorporated into already assigned work so it does not become extra work for the counties/districts?
- ❒ How will the county/district directors be engaged in the review process?
- ❒ At what point will the county/district directors be brought on board?
- ❒ How will the county/district directors have an opportunity to provide regular and ongoing feedback into the process?
- ❒ How will the county/district directors be educated about the purpose of these reviews?

II. Selecting Cases

- ❒ What is the period under review?
- ❒ What are the criteria for selecting cases (e.g. length of time open; placement/intact family)?
- ❒ Who is responsible for pulling the cases?
- ❒ From a technical standpoint, how will cases be pulled?
- ❒ How many cases will be pulled? (Remember to pull at least twice as many cases as will be reviewed.)
- ❒ How far in advance do cases need to be pulled?
- ❒ How far in advance do cases need to be reviewed for appropriateness, using the criteria developed?
- ❒ What are the criteria for dropping cases out of the review sample (e.g., family refuses to participate, case closed throughout review period, etc.)?
- ❒ Who will decide which cases should be dropped from the review sample?

III. Inclusion of Stakeholders

- ❒ Which stakeholders will be included as part of the review (birth parents, caregivers, children/youth, service providers, community members, etc.)?
- ❒ Will stakeholders be part of the self-assessment process?
- ❒ Will there be interviews with stakeholders during the actual review?
- ❒ Will stakeholders serve as reviewers on the team?
- ❒ Will stakeholder involvement be driven by the county/district or the state?
- ❒ Will stakeholders have access to the final report?

IV. Site Selection

- ❑ Who will choose the dates for the on-site review and who will be involved in the decision?
- ❑ How will the counties/districts be selected (volunteers, competitive, selected by state, etc.)?
- ❑ What will be the mix of urban and rural counties/districts?
- ❑ What other geographic, cultural, or political considerations are there for selecting counties/districts?

V. Scheduling

- ❑ How far in advance will counties/districts be notified about the review?
- ❑ How will counties/districts be included in the scheduling process?
- ❑ How far in advance will a pilot test of the process be done (if process is being pilot tested)?

VI. On-Site Preparation

- ❑ Who will be the key contact in the county/district office?
- ❑ Who will be responsible for each of the following?
    - ❑ Reviewing selected cases for appropriateness?
    - ❑ Notifying workers and supervisors about which cases will be reviewed?
    - ❑ Providing basic training to workers and supervisors about the purpose of the reviews and the focus on outcomes, not on individual case work practices?
    - ❑ Preparing "contactors" for setting up interviews (contactors need to explain the following in consistent way to people who will be interviewed: the purpose of the review; the focus of the review; reminder that this will not affect any related cases positively or negatively)?
    - ❑ Setting up interviews?
        - ❑ How many interviews?
        - ❑ Who must be interviewed (birth parents, children, foster parents, other stakeholders)?
        - ❑ How will interviews be sequenced (e.g., need all people from a case interviewed on same day)?
    - ❑ Where will interviews be held?
    - ❑ What are the procedures for no-shows and cases that "fall apart" at the last minute?
- ❑ Where will reviewers work?
- ❑ Does this space include phones, desks, and computers?
- ❑ Who will make the travel arrangements, including transportation, directions, lodging, for the reviewers?
- ❑ Who will ensure that there are ample supplies available (especially pens and notepads)?
- ❑ Who is the key contact at the state level for each county/district throughout the process?

VII. The Review Team

- ❒ What will be the composition of the review team (Central Office/State Office staff; district workers; district supervisors; district managers, workers/supervisors/managers from surrounding districts, stakeholders)?
- ❒ Who will serve as review team leaders to support reviewers, QA instruments, manage debriefings, etc.?
- ❒ What are the plans for training the team leaders?
- ❒ Will reviewers work alone or in pairs for each case?
- ❒ What are the plans for training the reviewers?
  - ❒ Are training manuals developed?
  - ❒ Has the purpose of the reviews been discussed with reviewers?
  - ❒ Do reviewers understand the context of the review in the larger state work and how they fit into that process?
  - ❒ Is there a focus on outcomes for children and families rather than casework processes?
  - ❒ How will the state gain targeted information on practice through these reviews?
  - ❒ Have reviewers seen the actual review tool before training begins?
  - ❒ Has the actual review tool that will be used in reviews been tested by reviewers using a sample case?

VIII. While Onsite

- ❒ Will there be an entrance conference?
  - ❒ Who will be invited?
  - ❒ Who will manage the meeting?
  - ❒ What is the role of the county/district staff at this meeting?
  - ❒ How long will it be?
  - ❒ When will it take place relative to the actual reviews beginning?

- ❒ How will cases be debriefed throughout the week?
  - ❒ Will there be a short period of time at the end of each day to review cases?
  - ❒ How long will each team have to debrief each case (e.g. 20 minutes per case)?
  - ❒ How will time for debriefs be managed?

- ❒ Will there be a block of time on the last day to identify trends across all cases prior to the exit meeting?
  - ❒ How and when will the team leader develop a draft of this?
  - ❒ How will reviewers be coached and supported to focus on strengths and what is going well during their debriefs as well as discussing problems?

- ❒ How will the team leader QA instruments throughout the week?
- ❒ How will reviewers be encouraged to look for strengths and things that are working well in counties/districts?
- ❒ Will there be an exit meeting?
    - ❒ Who will be invited?
    - ❒ Who will manage the meeting?
    - ❒ What is the role of the county/district staff at this meeting?
    - ❒ How long will it be?
    - ❒ When will it take place relative to the actual reviews ending?

IX. After the Review

- ❒ Who will have primary responsibility for writing the Final Report?
    - ❒ What will be the timeframe for completing the Final Report (e.g. 30 days)?
    - ❒ Who will ensure that the Final Report supports the onsite exit meeting findings?
    - ❒ Will the counties/districts have the opportunity to review a draft prior to finalization?
- ❒ Will the counties/districts need to respond to the report with some sort of mini-PIP?
- ❒ How will responses to the Final Report get folded into existing county/district reports?
- ❒ How will the Final Report be used by the county/district?
- ❒ How will the Final Report be used by the state?
- ❒ What are the feedback and communication channels between the counties/districts and the state relative to responses to the reviews and the Final Report?
- ❒ How will this report be made to "come alive" to direct line staff?
- ❒ How transparent will the Final Report be?
- ❒ Will all counties/districts have access to all reports?
- ❒ Will the Final Report be shared with interviewees/stakeholders?
- ❒ Will the Final Report be released or posted publicly?
- ❒ How will findings be communicated?
    - ❒ Will there be statewide reports that roll up the quarterly county/district reports?
    - ❒ Will there be statewide conclusions drawn about the county/district reports?
    - ❒ How will other counties/districts be encouraged to see and use information in these reports?
    - ❒ What will the connection be between these reports and the state's PIP?
    - ❒ What will the connection be between these reports and other systems such as Training, SACWIS, etc.?

- ❒ What will the role of data be in the reviews?
    - ❒ Do counties/districts look at the National Standards by their specific geographic area?

- ❒ What other data do counties/districts look at regularly?
- ❒ How do they use these data (compliance, management, outcomes, planning, etc.)?

X. Documenting the Review Process

- ❒ Who will develop the procedures manual on reviews (can be modeled on Federal CFSR manual or after this checklist)?
- ❒ When will the manual be developed?
- ❒ How will it be distributed and/or shared?